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ABSTRACT

Highlighting the fundamental concepts of discipline-based art education (DBAE), this essay supports a comprehensive elementary and secondary education visual arts teaching approach that features content and skill learning in art history, production, criticism, and aesthetics. Section 1, "The Arts and the Mission of Education," considers: (1) art education's role; (2) learning environments; and (3) the function of the arts in the schools. Section 2, "The Status of Art in the Schools," explores visual art in relation to emotions, talent, intelligence, assessments of student achievement; and creativity development. Section 3, "What Is Discipline-Based Art Education?" describes: (1) assumptions concerning how students learn about art; (2) DBAE course contents; (3) DBAE objectives; (4) alternative curriculum structures; (5) curricular activities; (6) the role of curriculum guides and resources; (7) evaluation processes; (8) ideal DBAE curriculum characteristics; and (9) the relationship of DBAE to the total education process. Two photographs of sculptures and 36 references are included. (JHP)

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The Role of Discipline-Based Art Education in America's Schools

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FOREWORD

The Getty Center for Education in the Arts is pleased to present this essay by noted art educator and author, Dr. Elliot W. Eisner. We feel it is a major contribution to the ongoing discussions about the place for art in America's schools.

Believing that art education is basic to every child's development, the Getty Center has dedicated itself to improving the quality and status of arts education in elementary and secondary schools. Given the breadth of possibilities in the arts, the Center has focused its initial activities on visual arts education.

To accomplish its goal, the Center has adopted an approach to visual arts education which calls for the teaching of content and skills from four disciplines that contribute to creating, understanding, and appreciating art: art history, art production, art criticism, and aesthetics. This comprehensive approach has been called discipline-based art education or DBAE.

In an effort to generate dialogue and inform a broader public about DBAE, the Center has engaged in a number of activities over the past two years. After studying school districts across the country which are attempting to implement discipline-based art education programs, we published our findings in a report entitled *Beyond Creating: The Place for Art in America's Schools.* We then sought feedback on *Beyond Creating*'s findings and recommendations through a series of regional roundtable discussions with school and arts administrators, teachers, artists, and parents. The proceedings from these roundtables also have been published and disseminated widely.

Throughout this process, we recognized the need, frequently expressed by teachers, curriculum developers, school administrators, and artists, for a more definitive examination of DBAE. But, likewise, we recognize that there is not one right way to teach the art content and skills embraced by the discipline-based approach. Numerous curricula and instructional methods will emerge suited to individual school districts and teaching preferences.

We present Dr. Eisner's essay bearing these considerations in mind. We hope that it will serve to delineate some of the fundamental concepts of discipline-based art education, without being prescriptive. We offer this essay to readers in hopes that they may find it useful in their own efforts to establish and sustain more substantive visual arts programs in their schools and communities.

Leilani Lattin Duke
Director
The Getty Center for Education in the Arts

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ELLIOT W. EISNER

A scholar of wide-ranging interests and a professor of education and art at Stanford University, Elliot Eisner has devoted a major portion of his professional life to advancing the cause of art education in America's schools. His books and articles have been translated into several languages, and he has lectured on art and education throughout the world.

Professor Eisner's special scholarly interests are in the contributions the arts make to the development of human intelligence and the ways in which the arts help us experience and understand the world. For his work in these areas, he has received numerous awards including the Palmer O. Johnson Memorial Award and the Award for Distinguished Contributions to the Curriculum Field from the American Educational Research Association, as well as both Guggenheim and Fulbright Fellowships. Most recently, he received an honorary doctorate from the University of Oslo in Norway.

Elliot Eisner has served as president of the National Art Education Association, vice president of the American Educational Research Association, and vice president of the International Society for Education Through Art. In September, 1987, he will take up residence as a fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences in Palo Alto, California.

The Arts and the Mission of Education

"A painter takes the sun and makes it into a yellow spot. An artist takes a yellow spot and makes it into a sun."

Pablo Picasso

IS ART ORNAMENTAL IN EDUCATION?

Americans are often reminded that education is serious business, that we live in an increasingly competitive world, and that our schools should prepare our children for the stiff competitive race in which they will have to participate. We are told that school programs should emphasize what is basic in education—a claim that is hard to dispute. What is not basic is considered marginal or ornamental, nice but not necessary. If our children are to make it in a world that thrives on competition, they need to be equipped with the tools they will need to run the race well.

Just what is basic and just what that race consists of is less than perfectly clear. To be sure, our children should be able to read, but shouldn't they also want to read? And if so, what kind of material? Of course we want our children to write well, but does writing well consist merely of being able to spell correctly and to use proper grammar and punctuation? Or does it also mean having something interesting to say? Certainly we want our children to be able to calculate accurately, even in an age of the hand-held calculator. But don't we also want them to be able to reason mathematically and to use their mathematical imagination to estimate what cannot always be calculated? In short, don't we want more for our children than the simple basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic? I think most

Americans do. I believe that most Americans want their children not only to have these skills, but also to have well-developed minds and to be able to enjoy the intellectual and artistic wealth that our culture and our nation have to offer.

Are the arts ornamental in our schools? Are they the luxuries that we allow our children to enjoy after the necessities have been acquired? Or is there another conception of the role of the arts in our schools and a more compelling view of our schools' educational obligations? Allow me to suggest one.

SETTINGS FOR LEARNING

All children come into the world with a variety of capacities that, through the course of their childhood, they have opportunities to develop. The home, for example, affords opportunities for children to listen to stories and, at times, to learn to read. Social settings give them opportunities to learn how to relate to others. The abilities to use language and to participate as a member of a social group are skills that early forms of socialization cultivate. Much of what children become as human beings is profoundly influenced by what they have the opportunity to learn during their preschool years. Later, one of the most important sources of human development is located in that social institution we call the school, within which our children are required by law to spend a major portion of their childhood. By the time a child graduates from high school, he or she will have spent about 12,000 hours in school, will have been taught by 30 or more teachers, and will have devoted about one year of his or her life to taking or preparing for tests designed to determine if what has been taught has been learned. The school is a powerful agency, and the kinds of opportunities afforded or denied our children are something about which we should care deeply.

The major means by which a child's potential is given the opportunity to develop is the school curriculum and the quality of teaching through which it is mediated. The curriculum of the school defines for students the opportunities they will have to develop their thinking skills and gives them access to the intellectual wealth of their culture. Although we usually don't think of the school curriculum this way, the curriculum is, in fact, a mind-altering device. It is a program designed to teach children how to think and what to think about. In this view, the potential that children possess provides the promise that effective educational programs realize. The process of education might be said to have as one of its major aims the conversion of brain into mind; schools provide the conditions through which the mental capacities of the young are brought to realization. Schools also give our children the opportunity to experience, to understand, and to enjoy the important cultural resources they inherit as human beings and as members of a culture. What we teach and how well we teach make a difference.

Among the most important resources in our culture are the arts. In a more general sense, it is the expressive or the aesthetic aspects of the world in which our children live that constitute the potential subject matter for arts programs in our schools. School programs provide—or fail to provide—the opportunities for children to learn how to think intelligently through and about the arts. Just how the arts make this contribution is related to the biological characteristics of our species. Education starts with the biological capacities of the human being.

THE BIOLOGICAL BASIS OF LEARNING

If we think about our biological makeup, it becomes clear that we are endowed with a sensory system that allows us to experience the qualities of the world into which are are born.[1] Each sense is qualitatively specific; that is, we see what can be seen with our eyes, hear what can be heard with our ears, and experience the tactile world with our sense of touch. As we mature and learn, the ability to use our senses becomes increasingly powerful. We learn to focus our sight. We learn to track moving objects. We learn to distinguish between the subtle and complex qualities of the world.[2] Eventually, we become highly perceptive to very subtle differences, especially in those areas we care about most. The mother of a young child, for example, learns to distinguish very subtle differences in the ways her baby cries: one sound indicates hunger; another, the desire to be picked up. Our sensory system develops into highly refined information-pick-up systems that play a major role in the creation of our consciousness.

As we learn how to experience the world, our sensory system becomes increasingly acute, and we are able to classify and recall what we have experienced. We can remember and we can compare and contrast in our memory what we have encountered. Recall is an extremely important human function. It allows us to reflect before we act, to find our way about, and to build upon previous experience.

Although these processes appear automatic and fully developed at birth, they are not. Young infants learn to focus and to track moving objects. It requires a few months before a child can remember its mother's face.[3] The way we use our sensory systems and our ability to remember are developed abilities, potentialities of mind that can be fostered or thwarted through experience.

We possess another ability that goes beyond the ability to recall. It is the ability to manipulate imaginatively the images or concepts that we are able to recall. It is through the process of imaginative transformation that human beings are able to conceive what is not, but what might be. It is this process that also gives us the new insight—the double helix as a model of DNA, for example—that makes our culture viable. It is this creative vision, in the mind's eye, that provides the foundation for new forms in art and science, business and social life.[4]

All of these imaginative constructions are fed by the experiences that the senses make possible. Perceptivity—the ability to see what others do not—provides the building blocks for our imaginative life. Without refined sensibilities, our mental life would be limited and without the vividness and richness that make it feel good to be alive.

But the operations of our mental life are essentially private in character. What we think, feel, or imagine is located in our psyche and can be enjoyed, used, or criticized only by ourselves. If what we create in our mental life is to be made social, we must find some means to make it public. It is in this realm, the realm through which the private is made public, that we come to the visible and sharable products of our culture. These products are made public in the forms through which we represent what we have conceived. The arts constitute one of the important *forms of representation*[5] through which humans share what they have thought, felt, or believed.

Imagine a horse, light beige in color, trotting slowly across a bright green field under a cloud-filled blue sky. The pace of the horse begins to quicken, and, as it does, the trot becomes a gallop. As the horse begins to gallop, its color darkens, and the light beige horse gradually becomes deep purple in color. White wings begin to appear on its back and grow huge, moving up and down with each gallop. Our dark purple horse, with huge white wings, galloping across the bright green field, now begins to rise into the sky. Its image grows smaller and smaller as it penetrates a thick white cloud above and slowly disappears from view.

What was the journey like? What did the horse encounter beyond the white cloud? And how did the experience of observing its journey make us feel?

Such an episode, one that we are able to imagine but not encounter directly, is something we can share with others. The form of representation I have used thus far is words narratively expressed. But we could, for example, try to convey the story or our feelings about it through dance. We could share it through poetry. We could paint or draw what we find important or interesting. In short, we could use any of a number of forms of representation to make public the images and experiences generated in our private imaginative life.

THE FUNCTION OF THE ARTS IN THE SCHOOLS

Any particular form of representation we choose to use both constrains and makes possible what we can convey. Poetry can reveal some aspects of our "story," but conceals others. Dance can say some things, but not everything. Through the visual arts, we can share some aspects of our experience, but not others. Our culture is replete with a variety of forms of representation because humans have found it necessary to invent such forms in order to express what they want to convey. The curricula of our schools are the major means through which our children learn the "languages" of these forms, and it is by learning these languages that they gain access to the kinds of experience that the forms make possible.

When our children are unable to "read" the languages of art, or music, or mathematics, or written prose, the content these forms possess and the experience they provide cannot be known. It is in this sense that the curriculum of the school is aimed—or should be aimed—at the development of multiple forms of literacy.

Our schools ought to empower our children to have access to the major sources of our culture. The arts are one of the most important of such sources. The presence of the arts in our culture and in every culture on our planet is testimony to the fact that humans have always had a need to explore the aesthetic possibilities of form and to obtain through them satisfactions and insights that cannot be secured elsewhere. The arts are testimony that humans have a need to convey and to represent what cannot be expressed in other forms of representation.[7] If, for example, words could say what the visual arts can convey, the visual arts would hardly be necessary.[8]

What, then, is the function of the arts in the school's educational mission? One function is to help the young acquire the skills—the multiple forms of literacy, as I have called them—that will give them meaningful access to cultural capital. Such skills are not an automatic consequence of maturation. Their level of development depends on the kinds of opportunities children have for acquiring them during the course of their lives. For most children, school is a major resource for acquiring such skills. If the young are not to be deprived of the insights and pleasures of the arts, the presence of the arts in our schools is a necessity we cannot afford to neglect.

Besides access to cultural capital, the arts provide another contribution of major importance to the educational development of the young. The arts also develop minds. Every sensory modality and each form of representation, as well as every material and each array of expressive techniques, exact their own unique intellectual demands. Learning to compute and to think mathematically draws upon thinking skills that differ from those employed in dance, the visual arts, or literature. The types of intelligence we are able to use depend largely on the opportunities we have had to practice the skills of which they consist.[9] The content we include in the school curriculum defines the opportunities we provide to the young to develop these skills.

Consider, for example, the kinds of perceptual skills fostered in effective art programs, the particular art form to which this essay is addressed. One such set of skills has to do with the education of vision. The visual arts are the only area in the school curriculum that is explicitly concerned with the visually expressive, the visually relational, that is, with the primacy of the visual features of the environment, including works of

art. So much of our perception is essentially instrumental in nature; we look in order to identify, to classify, to label, to locate ourselves in space. So much of schooling is a matter of learning words, the labels, the categories that replace the qualities they stand for. The visual arts are reminders that the visual world can be seen and enjoyed for its own sake, not simply as a means for some other end. Seeing in this way does not develop unaided. On the contrary, much of what we do in school decreases the probability that an exploratory attitude towards the perception of the visual world will develop. We move children, it seems, as rapidly as we can from percept to label, and in our haste to have them name, they miss what cannot be named, the very qualities words cannot describe.

One of the great contributions of drawing and photography, as well as the critical aspects of the art curriculum, is that they invite the child to look carefully so that he or she might see. For the first time, through art, the child can discover the visual richness of the qualitative world we inhabit. In this process of seeing freshly, consciousness itself is born.

Consider, further, the kinds of problems that children deal with in creating a sculpture, a drawing, a painting, a photograph, or a film. Virtually all such problems have multiple solutions. Unlike much of what is taught in spelling, arithmetic, and early writing, there is no single right or wrong way to solve a problem or to formulate an answer in the arts. Like the problems encountered in life outside of school, there are many solutions and several answers among the alternatives one considers.

The arts, when well taught, provide children with opportunities to use their imagination, to create multiple solutions to problems, and to rely on their own judgment to determine when a problem is solved or a project is completed. In the arts, there is no rule to "prove" the correctness of an answer and no formula to determine when a task is complete. In the arts, children must rely on that most exquisite of human intellectual abilities —judgment.

"For the first time, through art, the child can discover the visual richness of the qualitative world we inhabit. In this process of seeing freshly, consciousness itself is born."

Insofar as school programs are intended to prepare the young for problems that have multiple solutions, that cannot be resolved by formula or rule, the practice of such skills in the arts is an important educational resource. None of us is likely to be able to utilize mental capacities that we have never been given an opportunity to develop.[10]

Is art ornamental in education? It is only ornamental if giving meaningful access to some of our most significant cultural achievements is a marginal educational aim. It is only ornamental if the kinds of mental skills fostered by work in the arts are tangential to the kinds of problems both children and adults encounter outside of school. Access to the wealth of our culture or the cultivation of the sensibilities, human imagination, and judgment are not peripheral educational aims. They are as basic as anything can be. Those who say that the schools should emphasize "the basics" often have too limited a view of what is basic in the educational development of the young. The arts represent a form of thinking and a way of knowing. Their presence in our schools is as basic as anything could be.

The Status of Art in the Schools

"Any idea that ignores the necessary role of intelligence in production of works of art is based upon identification of thinking with the use of one special kind of material, verbal signs and words. To think effectively in terms of relations of qualities is as severe a demand upon thought as to think in terms of symbols, verbal and mathematical. Indeed, since words are easily manipulated in mechanical ways, the production of a work of genuine art probably demands more intelligence than does most of the so-called thinking that goes on among those who pride themselves on being 'intellectuals.'"

John Dewey

Why, given the argument developed here, are the arts in such a marginal position in our schools? There are several reasons.

ART AND MIND, TALENT AND INTELLIGENCE

First, there is a long tradition in Western culture that regards the arts as matters of emotional catharsis rather than matters of mind.[11] Art is something you do with your hands, not with your head. To think well requires one to deal with abstraction, not with the qualities of color and space, tone or composition. Intellect is regarded as something that is best cultivated through subjects like mathematics and physics and through the use of language.[12] Since the school's first obligation is to cultivate intellect, and since the arts are believed to deal with emotions, the arts, in this view, are ornamental in education. They are useful as avenues for relief after the serious work of the school has been completed.

This distinction between matters of mind and matters of hand is reflected in the distinctions we make between intelligence and talent. Talented individuals are those who play a musical instrument well, paint a good picture, perform well on the athletic field. Those who are truly intelligent are good at abstract reasoning and solving difficult problems. Intellect and talent are both rare, but it is to intellect that the schools have their first responsibility.

Those who hold this view of mind, intellect, and intelligence fail to understand that the creation of powerful and sensitive images is a matter of mind, a matter that requires inventive problem-solving capacities, analytic and synthetic forms of thinking, and the exercise of judgment. The narrow view of intelligence that has impacted our schools limits our appreciation of the scope of the mind and the many ways in which truly intelligent behavior is displayed.

In recent years, psychologists have broadened our conception of intelligence.[13] They, like cognitive anthropologists,[14] have come to recognize that intelligence comes in many forms and is expressed in different ways both within and between cultures. Some individuals —architects, sculptors, painters—are highly intelligent in dealing with spatial problems. Others display their intelligence best in mathematical and logical reasoning processes. Others are most intelligent in their interpersonal relationships;[15] politicians frequently possess such forms of intelligence in abundance, as do those working with people in clinical settings. One of the major points of the newest research on intelligence emphasizes not only the variety of ways it is displayed, but the factors in the environment that can foster or hamper it. Intelligence, so to speak, is a developable commodity.

Such views are directly contrary to those that regard intelligence as fixed and limited to verbal and mathematical reasoning. For schools to define intelligence or intellect this way is to disregard the variety of intelligence that children possess and to place those whose strongest abilities are in the arts in a disadvantaged position. If the only in game in town is basketball, those under six feet tall are likely to be handicapped. Education can discriminate through opportunity and recognition denied, as well as through more overt means.

ART AND ASSESSMENT

A second reason for the marginal position of the arts in our schools is that, as school programs are now constructed, the arts are not formally assessed and do little to promote the student's academic upward mobility. Until quite recently, the arts did not carry much weight in college admissions decisions.[16] Understandably, parents want their children to succeed in school; they want them to do well so that opportunities beyond school will be open to them. Parents correctly perceive that there is a status hierarchy among the subjects in the school curriculum. Some subjects—math, for example—simply carry more weight than others. Hence, when the instrumental value of a subject is perceived to be low, it is likely to be given low status. If being good at the visual arts, music, theater, and dance are not of much value in the eyes of college admissions committees, and if such areas of work are regarded as "semisolids," the arts are bound to be assigned a marginal place in the structure of schooling.

These practical considerations do not mean that parents, for example, believe the arts be to unimportant in their child's life, only that they are not believed to be particularly useful in terms of short-term academic goals. What we have, then, is a curious separation between what people believe contributes to their child's general educational development and what they regard as important for succeeding in school. As long as our school's priorities are narrow and limiting, our children will have a hard time pursuing the arts as part of their general education. What we test is what we teach.

ART AND CREATIVITY

Two other reasons for the current position for the visual arts in our schools have to do with the way we have thought about their role in education. One of these reasons pertains to the long-standing emphasis among art educators and teachers alike that art should be used mainly to develop the child's general creative abilities.[17] For many, art was not something one learned to see, to do, or to understand, but something that unlocked the child's creative potential. As a result, many teachers resisted providing any structure or content in art programs. They thought that structure of any kind would stifle the child's innate creativity and that content, particularly content drawn from the work of adults,

would impose inappropriate models for young children. Furthermore, they believed that, in the final analysis, art was not so much taught as caught. This meant, in practice, that the child was to be exposed to a wide variety of art materials, the more the better, since such exposure was thought to stimulate the child's imagination and to provide a rich array of opportunities for self-expression. The results of such policies were often programs with little or no structure, limited artistic content, and few meaningful aims. Such programs were correctly perceived by parents and students alike as lacking substance and left the visual arts in a poor position to claim a serious place in the school's curriculum.

Another factor that has contributed to the marginal status of art in the curriculum is the belief that only a few children are actually talented in art and that the ability to create requires talent that only a few possess. When it is widely believed that some human abilities are a function of special gifts, the educational problem becomes not one of instruction, but of selection. We often hear people claim that they can't draw a straight line with a ruler, implying that no amount of exposure or instruction is likely to make any difference in their ability to draw. With this view, ability in the arts is thought to be the result of a genetically possessed aptitude that one either has or does not have. Yet those who hold such a view would be unlikely to claim that the ability to read or do arithmetic is an ability that one either possesses or does not. Those who hold such a view would not claim that children have, or do not have, the ability to do science or to understand history. Despite this inconsistency, there is a fairly widespread belief that it is futile to teach the arts to that large segment of the population that does not have the genetically determined capacity to understand, experience, or create it.

When such a view becomes persuasive, it creates a self-fulfilling prophecy: one does not provide meaningful programs or adequate instructional time in the arts. Then, the low level of student performance is used to validate one's preconceptions. The fact of the matter is that there are no human abilities that are either present or absent in a population. All of us, to some degree, are capable of learning something in any area, not necessarily to the same extent as others, but to some extent. Education as a process is aimed at converting potentiality to actuality. To relinquish this aim is to significantly diminish our educational aspirations and to guarantee that they will not be achieved.

These views of art in education have had a chilling effect on its contributions to our children. As a culture, we have regarded art as a product of emotion rather than mind. We have believed it to be unteachable. We have eschewed programs that have structure since we were fearful they would stifle the child's creative expression. We have correctly perceived that, as success is now defined in our schools, the arts have limited short-term instrumental utility; they possess little weight in the status hierarchy among the academic subjects we teach or in the academic credit assigned those subjects. Is art ornamental in education? Given the foregoing views, in most schools it has been and still is. But need it be? Is there some way of conceiving and designing art programs so that the substantial contributions of the arts become an educational reality for our children?

What Is Discipline-Based Art Education?

"The arts tell the student about the significance of direct experience and of his own response. In this sense, they are complementary to the message of science, where direct experience must be transcended and the individual outlook of each observer counts only to the extent to which it contributes to shaping the common conception of the phenomenon under investigation."

Rudolf Arnheim

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT LEARNING AND ART: CHILDREN DEVELOP FROM THE OUTSIDE IN AND THE INSIDE OUT

There is a widely held view that children's development in art is best served by a kind of benign neglect. Each child is believed to have a particular genetically structured program that unfolds over time if the environment in which the child lives is not stunted. The plant, as it were, will become all that it can be if only a nurturant environment is created. The kindergarten—literally, a garden for growing children—has been the model that has influenced our view of what children need. In this view, the child develops essentially from the inside out, not from the outside in.

There is little question that all children, like all adults, are influenced by their genetic constitution: we do not enter the world as blank slates, nor are we endowed with identical aptitudes. But it is also true that the kind of environment in which a child lives influences the kinds of aptitudes he forms, the mental skills he develops, and the cognitive structures through which he perceives and interprets the world. The abilities that children come to possess are not determined at birth, nor are the aptitudes individual children possess identical to those possessed by others. We are born like all other people, like some other people, and like no other person.[18] The task of education is not one of standing by and letting nature take its course, but one of providing the condition that will empower the young to shape their own development after leaving school.

For discipline-based art education, this means that we do not wait for children to learn simply by providing art materials they can manipulate, but that we provide supportive and encouraging instruction that guides learning. It means taking seriously the idea there is much of value in the visual arts—learning to see, to understand, to judge, and to create—and that teachers have a responsibility to help children have the kind of experience that will make what is valuable a part of their mental life. In sum, it means that those of us who share the ideals of discipline-based art education assume that children develop not only from the inside out, but from the ouside in.[19] The outside—the only location available to any teacher—is the only place from which we can teach. It is true that much development is genetically determined, but what children do with their genetically determined capacities will depend upon the opportunities they have to learn. The school is the institution, and curriculum and teaching are the means, for creating and guiding those opportunities.

A second assumption is that the acquisition of artistic skills in the making and perception of art is complex and subtle in character. Complex and subtle skills are seldom acquired in single settings. They require time, repetition, exploration, and continuity of effort and practice. The goals of discipline-based art education are not likely to be realized by skipping about from material to material, task to task. Learning to perceive, create, comprehend and judge requires as much or more continuity of effort as do those less complex skills that can be learned and applied by following the rules.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

A third assumption in discipline-based art education is that learning in art is related to the course of human development. This means that developmental features define abilities that curriculum planners and teachers must take into account. One cannot profitably attempt to teach six-year-olds principles of aesthetic judgment or to develop forms of perception that exceed their developmentally determined capacities. If some who have focused upon the child and his or her development have underestimated the child's limits, those in discipline-based art education must not overestimate them. A child of seven is quite unlikely to be able to grasp historical concepts that require a level of cognitive development that has not yet emerged. An adult who has had a history of intimidating encounters with the arts of drawing and painting cannot be expected to relinquish these fears in a moment and to immerse himself joyfully in such tasks. Our developmental level and our personal biographies affect how we experience what we encounter. Discipline-based art education is predicated on the assumption that those who teach are sufficiently sensitive to the developmental and experiential aspects of their students to be able to teach effectively. In practice, this means that we cannot afford to either underestimate or overestimate what children and adolescents can do. The activities in which they engage must be challenging, not disheartening. They must be *appropriately* beyond their present competencies.

MATTERS OF MEANING

A fourth assumption in discipline-based art education is that the curricular tasks that children are asked to engage in must have meaning to them: intrinsic, not simply extrinsic, meaning.[20] Intrinsic meaning is necessary if what children learn is to become an internalized part of their intellectual and emotional life. There is so much in schooling that for children is largely a matter of going through mindless routines. Discipline-based art education does not aim at having children jump through hoops or otherwise engage in tasks that they do not understand or for which they receive little satisfaction. Activities in which children engage must yield benefits that transcend the limits of the classroom by being applicable to life outside of the classroom. One way in which this can occur is by teaching for transfer; that is, helping children apply what they have been taught in settings other than the one in which they were taught.

Another way to increase transfer of learning is to make what is taught relevant to children while they are learning. If new insights make sense to the child, or prove useful, what this child learns will not only be meaningful, the insights and skills acquired are likely to be applicable elsewhere. What we seek to provide in discipline-based art education are activities that can generate such meaning.

THE AIMS AND CONTENT OF DISCIPLINE-BASED ART EDUCATION: THE FOUR DISCIPLINES OF LEARNING IN ART

Educational values live their educational lives within classrooms. Classroom life, in turn, consists largely of what teachers and students do together around a body of ideas, skills, and activities. It is the curriculum and the quality of the teaching that mediates it that influence what children learn in the course of their schooling. And ultimately, it is the scope of the curriculum that defines the opportunities that children will have to develop their minds.

One essential task in all curriculum planning activity is the formulation of aims and the identification of disciplines relevant to the achievement of those aims. For discipline-based art education, there are four major aims that are central to its mission. These aims pertain to the four most important activities that one can do with the visual arts: One can create art, perceive and respond to its qualities, understand its place in history and culture, and make reasoned judgments about art and understand the grounds upon which those judgments rest.

In the adult world, the most sophisticated expression of these four activities is found in the work of artists, art critics, art historians, and aestheticians. Artists have the imagination, sensitivity, and skills to create expressive visual forms. Art critics know how to perceive the works they attend to and to describe and interpret their subtle and complex features. Art historians understand the place of art in time and culture. Aestheticians are sophisticated about the bases for judgments about art and about questions pertaining to its status as a form of knowledge or insight into the world.

These four disciplines—art making, art criticism, art history, and aesthetics—are the four major disciplines from which the content of discipline-based art education is drawn. We want children to experience the joys of creating visual images and to have opportunities to acquire the skills that make such joys possible. We want children to develop the visual sensitivity to see and describe the subtle and complex qualities of both visual art and the visual environment in which they live. We want children to understand the relationship of art to culture, the interaction between, for example, the technology and ideology of a period and the forms that artists create. Finally, we want children to learn how to participate in the perennial dialogue regarding the nature of art, the grounds upon which art can be appraised, and by which one's judgments about it can be supported.

We believe that these abilities and forms of understanding not only illuminate what artists have made, they are also critical for experiencing the visual world at large. Since the visual world is always present, the ability to "read" its qualities and to experience its pleasures is virtually always available as well. Discipline-based art education is aimed at developing the skills, understandings, and attitudes that are needed to secure such pleasures.[21]

PRODUCTION

The educational significance of the four disciplines is not self-evident. Just what is it that makes work in these disciplines so important? Consider the process of making visual art. The opportunity to convert a material into a medium—a vehicle through which the child conveys ideas, images, and feelings—enlists and develops a range of important cognitive skills. First, the child needs to conceptualize in some general way the kind of image he or she wishes to bring into existence. The problem, and it is a problem, is to somehow shape material so that what has been conceptualized is given some physical embodiment in the

material.[22] The material carries the child's thought forward. To make a material function in this way requires not the application of a set of codified rules, but the creation of a set of expressive forms. To be able to do this, the child must develop sufficient skill to employ a technique in order to treat the material so that it will have a particular effect. Furthermore, the child has to organize the forms he or she has created. These forms must work, they must satisfy the standards the child holds for himself—all without the benefits of prescribed rules. No formulas can be used to determine the rightness of a visual solution to a visual problem. The child must exercise judgment, and judgment is dependent upon sensibility: the child cannot appraise what he or she cannot see or experience.

In working with materials in the context of an art problem, the child must do several other things that require sophisticated modes of thinking. The child must pay attention to nuance and to the complexity of the changing images while working. The child must plan ahead and be prepared to shift goals, that is, to be flexibly purposive. And the child needs to perceive the relationships of the parts to the whole, that is, to "*decentrate*,"[23] as a Piagetian might say. Because such cognitive tasks are demanding, they foster the child's ability to think about such matters and other related ones. Children have a wonderful way of learning to do what they are given an opportunity to do. The making of visual art provides opportunities not only to experience the pleasures and frustrations of creation, but also to practice and develop a valuable array of our most complex cognitive skills.

CRITICISM

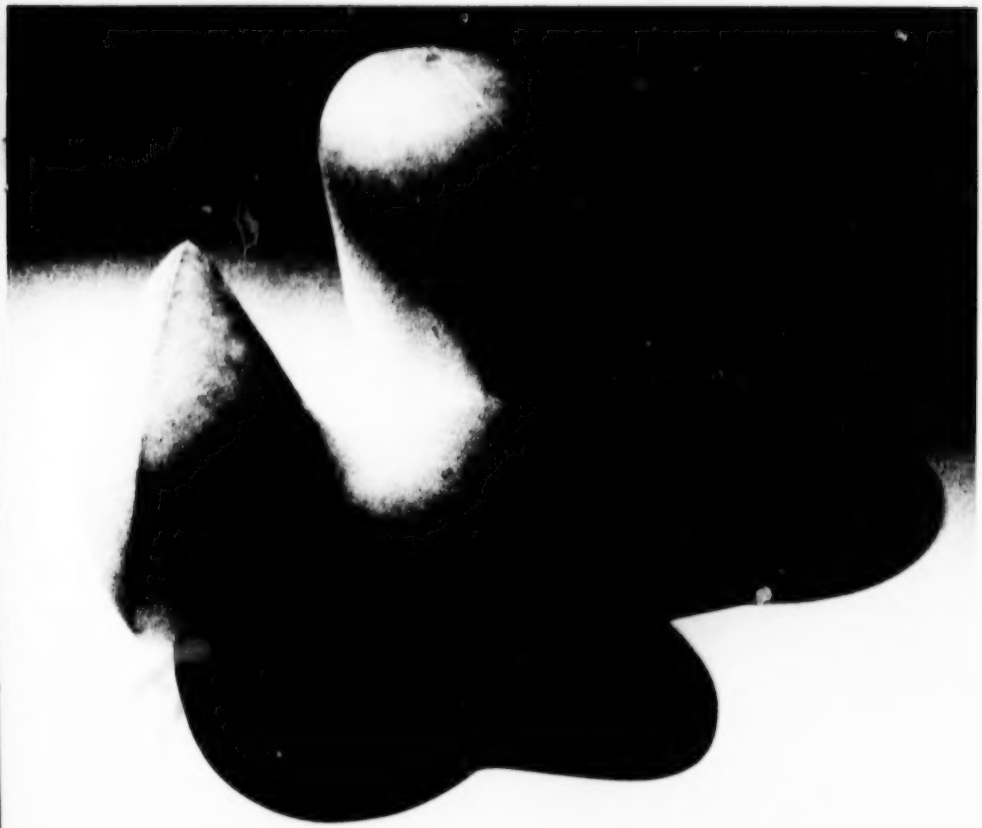
Engaging in art criticism is significant in discipline-based art education because it provides children with the opportunity to learn to see and describe the visual world in another special way. Our most customary form of perception is one that is instrumental in character. We usually look in order to recognize, rather than to explore visually.[24] We look for visual information that satisfies our practical need to identify, to categorize, to locate ourselves in space. As a result, our attention to visual form is usually extended in time just long enough to accomplish practical tasks. These durations are often very brief. They are not only brief, they neglect vast arrays of visual information that are present in the world but that, with our instrumental orientation, we never see. In a sense, discipline-based art education expands our perceptual habits and teaches us how to look so that we may see more. The result is that children develop both the attitudes and the skills required to experience, analyze, interpret, and describe the expressive qualities of visual form, qualities found not only in works of art, but also in the forms we encounter in the environment at large. Compare the following two images.

The first is a bronze figure by the Italian artist Umberto Boccioni; the second, a marble sculpture by Jean Arp, a 20th century French artist. What do these two sculptures convey? How do they make you feel? And what is it about these images that creates the feelings you experience?

Perhaps the most striking and most obvious feature of the Boccioni is that the figure is one of a man, not simply a man, but a man in movement. It is not only a man in movement, but one possessing great force, a kind of soldier or Roman warrior. How has the artist invested a static image with virtual movement and tank-like power? Consider the way the forms are shaped. The trailing edge of this figure seems to flow as if driven by wind; the forward lean of the body further accentuates the drive that this image presents to us. The hard reflective surface, the sharp edges of the head, thigh, and hip, the nondescript combination of mechanical and animal face, the helmeted head and the strong widely spread blocks into which the legs are anchored give the image not only a strong, but an aggressive, driving character. The weight of these blocks confers not so much stability, but power. It would take much to withstand the strength of this image's forward thrust.

What we have here is an abstracted form of the human countenance, armless, faceless—almost reflecting a legacy of armless Greek and Roman sculpture—that portrays aggressive strength. The artist shapes his material to shape our experience.

Bioccioni, Umberto.
Unique Forms of Continuity in Space.
(1913)
Bronze (cast 1931), 43⅞ x 34⅞ x 15¼".
Collection, The Museum of Modern Art, New York.
Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest.



Arp, Jean.
Human Concretion. (1935)
Cast stone, 1949, replica of original plaster, 19½ x 18¼".
Collection, The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

We turn to the work of Jean Arp. Here we find an image of soft curves, almost fetal in character, that gives us a sense of repose rather than of movement, but if of movement, then one of growth rather than of aggressive, forward thrust. In Arp's work, we see a large, smooth form almost hovering over two smaller ones that echo the larger one. Here we find a soft surface with no gloss, no reflection, no sharp features, but a kind of mellow skin-like quality that supports the organic character of the form itself.

The image as a whole has three sections whose creases meld into one another. The puffing out of the convex shape at the left and its repetition in a smaller scale at the right serve to create a kind of visual mass into which the central form is nestled. What we have here is an organic, almost biological image—one that seems to possess the capacity to grow.

Boccioni and Arp have orchestrated our vision, our feelings, and our consciousness because they were able to imagine, to see, and to create. The more we attend to their images, the more we see what they possess. The more we see, the more we feel. The area of art criticism in discipline-based art education is intended to help students participate in this chain of looking, seeing, and experiencing, and later to transfer what they have learned to do with art to the world at large.

The ability to see the qualities these sculptures possess is a means for shaping or, more correctly, creating our consciousness. The extent to which our senses are dulled is the extent to which our awareness is limited. Our imaginative capacities depend upon the content that an intellectually acute sensory system can provide.

HISTORY AND CULTURE

History and culture constitute a third important area for learning in discipline-based art education. Here we are interested in helping children understand that art does not emerge in the proverbial vacuum. All art is part of a culture. All cultures give direction to art, sometimes by rejecting what artists have made and at other times by rewarding them for it. To understand culture, one needs to understand its manifestations in art, and to understand art, one needs to understand how culture is expressed through its content and form.

The austerity of a Shaker chair or table is a reflection of the religious convictions of the Shakers and how they thought life should be lived. The aggressive force and movement of futuristic artists in early 20th-century Italy reflect powerful ideological beliefs about what Italian society should become. The pristine and lean qualities of the steel and glass skyscraper embody a view of the optimal relationship of man and machine. Such art forms in each period, each location, each culture mutually influence each other. Just as culture shapes art, art shapes culture. Our convictions, our technology, and our imagination shape our images, and our images, in turn, shape our perception of the world. One major aim of discipline-based art education is to help students understand these relationships by examining the interaction between art and culture over time.

AESTHETICS

All people who look at art make judgments about it. Some of these are essentially statements of preference, statements that describe what pleases or displeases us. However, there are differences between what we enjoy and dislike and what we regard as artistically excellent. On what basis can we make judgments about the quality of works of art? Are there certain definable criteria that all good works of art must meet? Discipline-based art education is based on the premise that it is useful for children to become reflective about the basis of their judgments concerning the quality of works of art, as well as about the qualities of the visual world around them. The major intellectual resources for making such judgments are to be found in that branch of philosophy known as aesthetics. Aestheticians have developed a literature that addresses complex questions having to do with the nature of art, whether visual art provides knowledge, and the appropriate criteria for appraising quality in art. While discipline-based art education has no interest in "producing" professional aestheticians, it is interested in encouraging students to join in the continuing conversation about the nature and meaning of art in life. This conversation is most articulate in the field of aesthetics, a field that offers a basis for criticism in art.

Each of these four disciplines—the making of art, art criticism, art history and culture, and aesthetics—defines a major area in which learning activities are created and hence where learning is fostered. Collectively, they constitute a substantive set of resources for defining the aims and content for the design of discipline-based art education curricula.

A WORD ABOUT OBJECTIVES FOR DISCIPLINE-BASED ART EDUCATION

Thus far, we have described the aims of discipline-based art education and the four major disciplines for creating learning opportunities for children. Educational aims are those general statements of educational value that give direction to an educational enterprise. Aims are important as a kind of educational policy statement—they tell the world what is valued for a school or classroom.

In the process of curriculum development, aims are translated into goals, and goals into objectives. Educational objectives are statements of what students are expected to be able to do after they have engaged in a set of curricular activities. In years past, educators have

"The teaching of art cannot afford to become a mindless or essentially lifeless routine that lacks spontaneity and pedagogical innovation."

often expected teachers to formulate hundreds of specific educational objectives in order to demonstrate that they were planning curriculum competently.[25] The result of this emphasis on specificity and detail was to burden teachers with requirements that did little educational good. Often, the result of such specific objectives was a curriculum that was fragmented and incoherent. Discipline-based art education does not attempt to reduce important educational aims to a trivial array of specific objectives; six to twelve objectives for a subject for any academic year may very well be adequate for guiding curriculum planning and assessing learning. Mechanistic and reductionistic approaches to curriculum planning have little virtue. What is important is that teachers and students understand the educational point of the tasks in which they are engaged, that they believe the aims and goals of the effort are worthwhile, and that the efforts they make to achieve them are satisfying. The teaching of art cannot afford to become a mindless or essentially lifeless routine that lacks spontaneity and pedagogical innovation.

The import of the foregoing is that school administrators must recognize that there will be times when teachers will need to shift objectives in process; one cannot predict everything that is of value in the classroom. It is the essence of truly skilled teaching to know when to alter one's objectives and to take advantage of new, unexpected teaching opportunities.

One final point needs to be made about the nature of objectives in discipline-based art education. In conventional approaches to curriculum planning, objectives are emphasized that specify the particular behavior a child is to be able to display after an instructional period. If, for example, the teacher's objective is for children to know the multiplication tables through nine, the teacher can determine with little ambiguity if his or her students have achieved it. Their behavior at the end of instruction and the specifications of the objective will, ideally, be perfectly matched. In the visual arts, particularly in the productive area, what is valued is often productive novelty, fresh ways of describing the world or of resolving visual problems. What one seeks, therefore, is not the kind of predictability that is desirable in mathematics and spelling, but diversity and surprise.[26] In a field where productive novelty is an important virtue, the teacher should not always determine the value of a child's art work or interpretation of art by matching it to a preconceived expectation, but instead, by appraising its unique features. In the visual arts, a static model of objectives is far less appropriate than it is where the educational aim is to help students learn standard conventions.[27]

ALTERNATIVE CURRICULUM STRUCTURES

How can a teacher organize content, time, and instruction to make discipline-based art education a reality in the classroom? Let's begin with the elementary school. There are four major ways through which learning experiences can be formally organized in an elementary school classroom. First, the teacher can set aside time each week for instruction in a particular content area. From 10 A.M. to 11 A.M. every day the class will have social studies, from 1 P.M. to 2 P.M. on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, science. The subject is conceived of as an entity having its own time and space, and a curriculum is provided to engage students in that content area at the designated time each week. In most self-contained elementary school classrooms, there is a schedule that in varying degrees is followed to ensure that students receive the required amount of instruction in a particular subject. Indeed, many states precribe the amount of instructional time students are to receive in particular subjects at each grade level. In such a curriculum structure, the boundaries between the various subjects are well defined. We might regard such a structure as a collection-type curriculum in which subjects have considerable boundary strength.[28]

A second way of providing instruction is to design an integrated-type curricular structure in which the boundary strength between subjects is diffuse. Art and social studies, math and science, reading and social studies are integrated or taught together. For example, students study the American Plains Indians, they investigate the ways in which they live, and then create pottery using methods similar to those employed by the people whose culture they are trying to understand. They learn pinch bowl techniques and coil construction, and visit a local museum that has a collection of pottery indigenous to the people they are studying. When one uses such an approach, art is integrated with the social studies. Many elementary school teachers interested in creating a sense of coherence in their curriculum like to develop programs having such features. In such cases, the time allocation among the various subjects taught is difficult to determine. They fuse together.

A third structure through which instruction can be provided is to create areas within elementary school classrooms in which students can work on projects independently. An area within the classroom is devoted to science, another to art, one to computers, and so forth. The child works on projects formulated with the teacher in these areas, often as an important supplement to work within the foregoing two curriculum structures. Depending upon the kind of educational climate the teacher develops, the amount of time and instruction devoted to projects within these settings can be marginal or substantial. In the open classrooms of the

1960s and in the forms of life lived in Plowden-oriented English primary schools of the same period, such centers of work played a very important role.[29]

A fourth curricular structure is, of course, some combination of the three structures already described. Teachers can set aside specific amounts of time for instruction within particular subjects, and they can integrate subjects when they believe it appropriate to do so. In addition, areas designated within the classroom allow children to pursue projects defined with the teacher's assistance. These four curriculum structures constitute the major choices available to elementary school teachers. While each has its own particular strengths and weaknesses, in discipline-based art education there is a clear preference for one of them. Let's examine each briefly.

Of all the alternatives, the curriculum structure with strong boundary strength—that structure that sets aside specific amounts of time each week for instruction in a particular subject—is most likely to focus children's attention upon the ideas and skills the teacher wishes them to learn. The designation of time and the location of space in the school week is also a symbolic indication of the subject's importance. Time is our most precious educational "commodity"; it is an unrecoverable resource. How much time we devote to a subject is perhaps the important operational definition of how much we value that subject. The earmarking of time gives each subject its own space and allows both teachers and students to attend to the particular aims and contents of the field without compromise.

The allocation of specific amounts of time during the school week also affords the teacher an opportunity to plan a curriculum that has continuity and sequence. The road ahead assumes a greater degree of predictability than one that develops out of the events of several fields of study. In discipline-based art education, there is a clear preference for the provision of specific and regular amounts of time for art instruction each week.

Each curriculum structure has its costs as well as benefits. The costs of a collection-type curriculum—one in which boundary strength is great—is that the subjects can easily become discrete entities having little relationship to each other. Students can study American history and look at examples of American art as if these two areas had nothing to do with each other. One overall aim in education is to provide an increasingly complex, yet coherent, view of the world. Science is affected by the time in which scientists worked. Mathematics does have a relationship to music. Art does influence the beliefs people hold during a particular cultural epoch. The insulation of one subject from another can be a conceptual liability. What this means, for curricular policy and for teaching, is that where appropriate in any subject being taught, teachers should try to establish connections between that subject and others. The focus is clearly on the subject, but tie-ins to other subjects can be made so that meaning and coherence are increased.

The integrated-type curriculum has the strength of revealing connections and relationships among an array of ideas, but the visual arts often suffer when they are taught exclusively in an integrated form. The problem emerges because of the emphasis given by teachers to the content and ideas of, say, the social studies; in integrated curricular structures, the visual arts frequently become adjunct. Consider, for example, the use of the American Plains Indians and pottery, described earlier. Understanding how American Plains Indians created pottery is not irrevelant for appreciating the pots they created. But one can understand the techniques of clay construction they employed—and even be able to apply them oneself—without appreciating the aesthetic or expressive features of the pottery itself. When this

occurs, the pottery experience becomes more of an excursion into cultural anthropology (an important area of study, to be sure) than a project having aesthetic aims. It is not that such aims could not be achieved within an integrated curriculum structure; it is only that the likelihood of doing so is small. The issue turns on matters of priority and emphasis. When the visual arts are integrated into other subjects at the elementary school level, their distinctive contributions are often neglected or underemphasized. It is because of such probabilities that, in discipline-based art education, there is support for specific allocation of time and space within the classroom for the teaching of the visual arts.

Regarding the third alternative, that curricular form built upon individual work projects, the provision of such opportunities in elementary classrooms is extremely important, but it is unlikely to provide the kind of continuity and regularity that discipline-based art education requires. As already indicated, the acquisition of skills and understanding in art is a complex, not a simple affair. Complex forms of learning need time for practice and continuity of exposure. The episodic, the discrete, and the isolated event that has little or no relationship to other skills and content and that does not grow more sophisticated over time is not likely to bring students into close contact with art. Curricular structures that provide continuity are best able to ensure significant learning in art. The independent project has important educational utilities, but, largely, as an adjunct to a curriculum having its own integrity within the school week.

The foregoing comments pertain to alternative curriculum structures within the elementary school classroom. Most elementary schools in America, up to about the sixth grade, are self-contained. One teacher is responsible for virtually all that occurs. At about the sixth grade, things begin to change; departmentalization and specialization emerge as dominant ways to organize students, teachers, and subject matter. At the middle and secondary schools, both structure and personnel change. The presence of trained art teachers at the middle and secondary school levels makes it possible to provide discipline-based art education having a very high level of quality. Art teachers have both the experience and training that general elementary teachers lack. Yet art teachers, by and large, have well-established habits and commitments. The teaching of aesthetics, even art history, is often not one of them. While the potential for par-

"...for discipline-based art education to realize the aims it embraces, the school district must provide support for the program throughout its schools, kindergarten through twelfth grade."

ticularly effective discipline-based art education is available at the middle and secondary school levels, art teachers whose backgrounds do not include art history or aesthetics or who have not developed the pedagogical skills to deal with these aspects of artistic learning will need assistance. Assistance takes two major forms: material resources and human resources. More will be said concerning both matters later. For now, it is more important to note the fundamental difference between the structures and personnel that function at the elementary school level and those at the middle and secondary school levels.

It is also important to recognize that the great potential that exists for strong discipline-based art education programs at the middle and secondary school levels depends in part on the strength of such programs at the elementary school level. If programs are weak for elementary school children, discipline-based art education teachers will need to start virtually from scratch later. If math instruction were absent or inadequate in the elementary schools, middle and secondary school math teachers would have an even more formidable task ahead of them. The implication of this is that for discipline-based art education to realize the aims it embraces, the school district must provide support for the program throughout its schools, kindergarten through twelfth grade. A program that must begin at the middle school level has lost six years of educational opportunity, and one that terminates at the sixth grade cannot build upon the foundation that has been laid. What is needed are programs that extend throughout the grades.

ON THE NATURE OF TEACHING IN DISCIPLINE-BASED ART EDUCATION

A curriculum, no matter how well designed, cannot make its optimal contributions without sensitive and intelligent teachers. Teaching, in turn, may be guided by certain rules of thumb, but not by rules. The context, the characteristics of the particular children being taught, the special aptitudes of the teacher, the features of the school and community all come to bear on how any curriculum, including discipline-based art education, is mediated. The implication of the foregoing is that no curriculum can provide a "teacher-proof" method for teaching.[30] Such an aspiration was naive in the 1970s when it was first conceived, and it is just as naive today. Children will always require sensitive and professionally able teachers to make the kinds of adaptations and adjustments that are required for a particular context. Discipline-based art education provides no set formula for success, no Betty Crocker recipe for practice. It is a set of resources developed from a set of convictions, theories and facts about how children learn, what is important to teach, and how content can be organized.

In spite of the fact that discipline-based art education provides no recipe for instruction, some considerations that influence the character of teaching deserve to be mentioned. The first of these is that motivation matters. One is not likely to engage children meaningfully in art activities unless children are motivated to engage in art activities. One important function of teaching is to set the stage for children to want to engage in the activities that are planned. This is more likely to occur if students believe the activity will be enjoyable, if they see the point of the activity, or if it provides a challenge they find interesting to cope with. Motivation matters. It is not a marginal aspect of effective teaching, but a central part of it.

Often children engage in school activities simply to meet the expectations of teachers or to acquire some points that can be cashed in for later rewards. We want children to be engaged in art activity because they want to, because they look forward to the pleasure and growing competency that such activity affords. Intrinsic satisfactions are, in the end, among the most durable consequences of work in school. If the pleasures of work in the visual arts are not an inherent aspect of the work itself, there is little reason to expect that children will wish to pursue such work after extrinsic rewards have been given.

Curricular activities that are likely to provide such satisfactions are those that are problem-centered in character. That is, they are activities that afford children an opportunity to use their minds to accomplish a goal, to resolve a problem, to find a solution. How can they create a surface of color that will provide a sense of visual vibration? Can they identify the work of a particular artist in his or her later period by extrapolating from the visual qualities of the artist's earlier work? Can they create visual abstract images that convey particular emotional qualities to those who view them? Are they able to provide compelling arguments for and against the claim that visual art is a form of communication? Such tasks present the kinds of challenges that not only capture student interest, but also develop sophisticated forms of thinking. Students who engage in such tasks must make inferences, envision possibilities, explore alternative courses of action, develop skills that allow them to apply techniques that affect the consequences of their decisions. A group of 30 children can, in principle, arrive at 30 different satisfactory solutions to the problems I have identified. Like the significant problems of life, there are usually several viable alternatives to courses of action, each having its own strengths and weaknesses. Such thinking skills are not unrelated to the problems one deals with in life outside of school.

The generic process of coping with problems is the process of inquiry.[31] Knowing how to inquire well requires opportunities to deal with problems. To the extent to which it is appropriate, discipline-based art education curricula are problem-centered in character and aimed at encouraging children to engage in an inquiry process. What we eventually seek is the development of those dispositions and skills that will enable children not only to solve problems provided to them, but also problems they formulate themselves.[32] We want children to be able to define their own agenda and to become the architects of their own education. In practical terms, this means that teaching in discipline-based art education will increasingly foster a sense of competent independence in the students we teach.

One final point about teaching in discipline-based art education. In describing the four major disciplines from which the content for discipline-based art education curricula is drawn—the making of art, the perception and description of art, the understanding of art in time and place, and the justification of judgments about the quality of works of art—we risk conveying the view that each of the four disciplines should be taught as a separate entity. This need not be the case. In fact, it is more likely, especially at the early elementary school grades, that art activities will draw in varying degrees from all four areas. Six- and seven-year-old children, for example, will probably devote considerably more time making visual images than linking the forms they make to historical periods. This does not mean that some reference to the fact that art changes over time and that people in different places make different images is not possible, even with very young children. It is simply to say there is no ideal arithmetical ratio to prescribe how much emphasis should be devoted to each discipline at any particular grade level. Such decisions are best left to the teacher, as long as it is understood that all four are important, but need not be taught as independent curricular strands. In the end, what receives emphasis will depend upon the teacher's professional judgment.

At the secondary level, it is not inconceivable that a course on aesthetics could be offered that would make heavy use of productive, critical, and cultural-historical resources. The particular manner in which individual courses or curricula are formed is not subject to abstract prescription. What is prescriptive is the need to attend not to one area of artistic learning or to another, but to all four. We fully expect that the curricular forms through which the aims of discipline-based art education are realized will be as varied as art itself.

What then, in sum, can be said about the character of teaching in discipline-based art education curricula? We can say that it is intended to be both flexible and purposive. We do not wish to bypass the competence of teachers or try to replace judgment with rule. We can say that it is intended to foster inquiry skills by providing children with tasks that are problem-centered in character. We can say that it is concerned with the cultivation of intrinsic satisfactions rather than the use of extrinsic rewards, that it aims to help students see the connections between the work they do in art in school and the world outside. Finally, teaching discipline-based art education curricula imposes no requirements regarding the ways in which the four disciplines of learning in art are organized. The important issue is that they be attended to. How that attention is provided depends upon the teacher's professional judgment.

PROVIDING RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

No array of ideas, regardless of how articulate or persuasive, will influence the lives of children if those ideas are not reflected in the practices of schooling. Discipline-based art education will remain little more than an idea if what happens in classrooms does not change. To bring about change in classrooms, teachers need resources, both material and human, that will help expand their pedagogical power. Material resources include the provision of a written curriculum that offers instrumental guidance by suggesting aims, learning activities, a sequence that might be used, and ways through which student learning can be assessed. Particularly at the elementary level, where most teachers have a limited background in art education, are such resources important. A written curriculum, accompanied, if possible, by instructional materials such as slides, visual reproductions, cassette tapes, games, and other instructional devices, should help articulate the aims of discipline-based art education in a language that is relevant to teachers in the context of their work. It should also illustrate the kinds of activities in which students might be engaged and suggest relationships that might be drawn between the ideas and skills developed in those activities and the world outside of school. For example, if students, say, at the fifth grade

level, are building three-dimensional modular structures out of drinking straws and pipe cleaners, relationships can be drawn between their task and contemporary architecture. The advent of an architectural philosophy that tried to marry man and machine is reflected in the glass-and-steel skyscraper, a modular structure built with mass-produced materials. Can children recognize some of the nascent similarities between their own efforts and those of prominent European architects instrumental in the development of the modern skyscraper?

A written curriculum provides a structure that teachers having little background in the visual arts can use to not only develop their students' skills and understanding, but their own. What we seek in the long term is the development of such skills and confidence among teachers that they can gradually replace curriculum materials developed by others with those that they develop for themselves. At first, however, it is unrealistic to expect that to occur. One major aim of a written curriculum is to free the teacher from dependence upon it, to so cultivate the teacher's sensibility and understanding that the teacher becomes a free agent pursuing aims to which he or she is committed.

The availability of a written discipline-based art education curriculum—or several—within a school district is also a way of conveying to the public, to students, and to the professional staff the conviction that the arts are an important part of the school's educational agenda. They are not mere fluff, a source of release from the really important work of the school. They are a part and parcel of it.

To say that discipline-based art education requires the presence of at least one written curriculum should not be interpreted to mean that the teaching of the visual arts should become an educationally lifeless academic pursuit that imitates the worst features of the academic curriculum. An area of study that prizes sensibility and imagination, that encourages risk-taking and intellectual play cannot achieve its most cherished aims by becoming rote or mechanical. Such qualities are of doubtful utility even in academic subjects; they have no place in discipline-based art education. What we seek is both seriousness and joy, exploration and rigor, effort and pleasure. To say that serious work in the arts is demanding and hard is not to imply that the work should be joyless. Curriculum materials should provide teachers with a challenging array of sequentially organized, goal-directed activities that capture students' interest and help them learn substantive content. Without such curricula, the aims of discipline-based art education are unlikely to be realized.

Finally, the provision of a written, districtwide curriculum, or several such curricula, increases the probability that the district will have continuity of learning in art. The quality of learning and the kinds of learning opportunities that high school students can deal with depend in large measure on what they have learned before. At present, in too many school districts, high school art teachers believe they have to start from scratch; they have little sense of what students might have learned before arriving at their classroom door. A written, districtwide discipline-based art education curriculum can ameliorate such educational discontinuities.

"Discipline-based art education must be seen as an integral part of the general education of children, not as a supplement to it."

It was indicated earlier that material resources were but one of two types of resources that it is important to provide. The other type is human resources. Ideally, the school should have a permeable boundary. When there are human resources to be drawn upon in the community that enhance or supplement the work of the teacher, these resources should be used. For example, many communities are populated with artists, craftsmen, and retired people who would welcome opportunities to share their knowledge with students. Many communities have museums or cultural centers that can be used to enrich what the school provides. The development of a master plan for the infusion of such resources can do much to enrich discipline-based art education.

Suggesting the creation of permeable boundaries between the school and the cultural human resources in the community is not to say that the major source of instruction be provided by visiting artists or craftsmen. These human resources are supplementary, not primary. The contributions of discipline-based art education must be built upon a basic, in-place curriculum, committed teachers, and adequate instructional time, as well as serious administrative

support. Discipline-based art education must be seen as an integral part of the general education of children, not as a supplement to it. For such contributions to be made, a discipline-based art education curriculum must be designed or acquired; it cannot be a series of episodic, short-term excursions into a variety of "interesting" activities.

One of the major human resources for the support of discipline-based art education goals is the principal of the school.[33] It is the principal, perhaps more than any other single individual, who acknowledges the legitimacy and importance of discipline-based art education. Teachers who believe that their principal places a low priority on systemic teaching of the visual arts are far less likely to provide such instruction than those whose principals believe art to be educationally important. Principals set the tone for the school. They convey in countless informal ways what they really value, and they demonstrate the extent of their support in how they talk to the professional staff about the school's mission.

For principals and central office administrators to provide effective support for discipline-based art education, they need to understand its assumptions, its aims, and the educational significance of the four disciplines from which its content is drawn. Conviction and credibility in leadership, as in other areas, grow out of understanding. It is difficult to achieve credibility as a leader in matters one does not understand.

Finally, there is the matter of expertise and consultation in art education. In some school districts—about 5 percent of the 15,000 school districts in America—one or more individuals are employed as art consultants. Many of these people, well trained in the visual arts and often quite skilled in providing assistance and guidance, are major advocates for discipline-based art education. They are among the very few who are in a position to see the art program districtwide. Most teachers seldom get a sense of their school, let alone the district. Most principals focus on their own building. It is the art consultant who sees the big picture. It is the art consultant who most often argues the case for the arts and protects their interests at the central office level. In some districts, art consultants have been successful in organizing lay people in the community who care deeply about art education to function as vocal and protective overseers. The cultivation of such a support system for discipline-based art education is one very useful way to ensure its longevity and vitality.

THE ROLE OF EVALUATION

Evaluation performs important functions in discipline-based art education. Unlike some who hold that evaluation has no place in the teaching of art since it is likely to thwart the creative expression of children and adolescents, those using discipline-based art education believe that educational practice that is not evaluated is professionally irresponsible. Evaluation is one of the important processes for improving the quality of curriculum, teaching, and learning. Basically, evaluation is, or should be, regarded as an educational medium, a resource for doing important things better.[34]

In discipline-based art education, there are three important "subject matters" to be evaluated: the curriculum itself, the quality of teaching, and the outcomes of the program.

First, the curriculum itself should be the object of critical evaluation. What is the quality of the content that constitutes the discipline-based art education curriculum? How easily can it be used? Is its language clear? Are the activities suggested likely to interest students, and to advance the practice of higher cognitive skills? Are there a sufficient number of appropriate examples to help teachers and students understand what is being asked of them? Are connections suggested between the content in the materials and areas outside of classroom life? In short, do the materials help teachers teach for transfer? Does the curriculum provide options for the teacher; that is, are there alternative ways to travel to the same destinations?

Questions such as these are analytic devices for taking a close look at curriculum materials that fly under the flag of discipline-based art education. If the materials do not meet the criteria suggested, they might need to be modified or even rejected. If the content in a curriculum is judged to be educationally trivial, it's not worth teaching. If it's not worth teaching, it's not worth teaching well. Solid discipline-based art education programs are built upon a solid discipline-based art education curriculum.

Second, no array of curriculum materials, no matter how well designed, guarantees excellent teaching, and no curriculum, regardless of how virtuous, can withstand poor teaching. It is the teacher who mediates the curriculum, sets the pace, provides the interpretation, and offers encouragement and guidance. Evaluation can and should be used to provide teachers with feedback on the quality of their teaching. This process, one not common in American schools, is not intended to rate or grade teachers, but to offer a kind of a mirror through which they might learn how they function as teachers of discipline-based art education. What this means in practical terms is that within a school some teachers will be given time to visit each other's classrooms in order to provide constructive and critical feedback. The point here is that the quality of learning in any classroom is not simply a function of the quality of the curriculum materials with which one works; it is profoundly influenced by the quality of the teaching children receive. To improve the quality of student learning, we must improve both curricula and instruction in our schools. Discipline-based art education is no exception.

The feedback described here is especially important when the pedagogical tasks a teacher engages in are new or especially demanding. It is one thing to say that discipline-based art education emphasizes an inquiry approach to learning and quite another to teach so that children are themselves engaged in that process. To the extent that discipline-based art education curricula demand new teaching skills, the need for feedback on teaching becomes increasingly important.

The third realm in which evaluation functions is in assessing the outcomes of discipline-based art education programs. Outcomes are stressed, rather than objectives, because outcomes are broader; one always reaps more in school than one sows, and often the unintended consequences of instruction are more important than those that were intended. Evaluation of outcomes pertains not only to the products of the students' efforts—the skills, the newfound appreciations, the fresh understandings, the refined judgment that students achieve—but also to the way in which students are engaged in the process of learning. We are interested in the quality of their involvement, the level and sources of their motivation, their willingness to explore, to take risks and to "fail." It is one thing to see a classroom filled with children who mechanically and dutifully complete the assigned tasks and quite another to see a classroom where chil-

dren are immersed in activities that are genuinely meaningful to them. Outcomes valued by teachers that are of little moment to students are likely to be short-lived. In discipline-based art education, there is as much concern with the process through which the child is engaged in his work as in the outcomes of that process.

Two other points about evaluation need to be made. First, evaluation is an activity that assesses the worth of some process or product. Evaluation is ubiquitous in human life; we are all engaged in one way or another in evaluative activity. This is mentioned because, in educational circles, evaluation and testing are often confused. Tests are devices designed to elicit behavior about which evaluative judgments can be made, but evaluative judgments do not depend upon the use of tests. We can and do evaluate without testing virtually all of the time.[35] For discipline-based art education, this means that the ongoing quality of a student's work, his or her questions, his or her level of engagement are important sources for making evaluative judgments. In a sense, each task and each question asked of and raised by a student is a "test." The build-up of judgments about student performance over time may indeed give the teacher a far more valid picture of how a student is doing than how well he or she performs on a test given at a particular point in time during the school year.

Second, it is important in discipline-based art education that the evaluative process not be the sole possession of the teacher. Students should have an increasingly important role to play in evaluating their work as they mature. They should be encouraged to compare their earlier work with the work that they are producing at present, and they should be encouraged to provide reasons for their judgment. They should, in other words, gradually assume ownership of the evaluative process. They should move from a state of evaluative dependency, where the locus of evaluation is external, to a state where the locus of evaluation is internal. The reason this is important is because discipline-based art education is an integral part of the aims of general education. General education aims at empowering students to chart their own educational voyage. Schooling is preparation for emancipation, not dependency. One becomes emancipated when one is able to plan and to appraise one's own efforts. Evaluation practices in discipline-based art education are intended to emancipate.

WHAT DOES YOUR SCHOOL DISTRICT PROVIDE: SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK

One of the ways to begin a process of change in your school district's art program is to assess what your district now offers. To make this assessment, you might compare what your school district offers to the following characteristics. A school district that has a fully functioning discipline-based art education program in place will have the following:

1. It will have a written curriculum that is employed districtwide in grades K through 12.
2. The content of the art curriculum will have been developed from four major art disciplines: art production, art criticism, art history, and aesthetics.
3. The curriculum is goal-oriented, and its activities are sequential in character. What students learn at one point builds upon what has preceded and prepares for what is to come.
4. The art program draws upon resources in the community to enhance what is being provided in the school.
5. Student learning is evaluated so that program strengths and weaknesses can be identified.
6. District policy requires that adequate instructional time be set aside for art instruction, and that the visual arts be regarded as a basic part of the students' general education.
7. School administrators and school board members support and encourage discipline-based art education and leave no doubt that instruction in this area is a basic part of the school's program.
8. Finally, this ideal school district will have an evaluation program that determines the extent to which a discipline-based art education curriculum is actually being implemented in the classroom and one that provides useful feedback for teachers for improving curriculum and instruction.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR OUR CHILDREN?

In the last analysis, the decisions we make about the programs we provide affect the kinds of lives that our children are able to lead. It is appropriate to ask, therefore, what's in it for our children? Why should we commit energy and scarce resources to the visual arts? What makes this realm of experience and culture so important? In short, why care?

The answers begin with a "penetrating" observation that there must be more to life than the pleasures of "Miami Vice" or "Loveboat." Children require no assistance gaining access to the programs on television that consume about 27 hours each week for children and 22 hours per week for adolescents.[6] These programs are designed to capture and hold our children's attention for as long as possible. They succeed remarkably well. These programs make few demands our children cannot meet and offer little they do not already have. Their intellectual substance is thin and their stimulation high. Not to be able to deal with more than what such programs provide is to ensure that our children will continue to attend to them, as they do now. What do they have as an alternative?

But there are alternatives, challenging alternatives that provide satisfactions qualitatively different from those secured through the mass media, pop culture, and the one-eyed monsters we have in our homes. The arts provide such alternatives. Whether they become meaningful to our children will depend upon the extent to which we help our children learn to "read" them. The development of multiple forms of literacy—the ability to secure meaning from the various cultural forms in which it is expressed—is one of the major aims of general education. Among those critically important cultural forms are the arts. To neglect the arts in our schools is to produce a generation of semiliterate children who will not miss the arts because they never will have known them. Schools, we believe, have an educational responsibility to provide the kind of general education that will enable our children to secure the pleasures, the insights, and the understandings that works of art make possible.

The acquisition of insight and understanding, two long-standing educational aims, is not typically thought of as something the arts could provide. Yet, the arts have much to say about the world that is not revealed in language in its customary form. Humans have created the arts precisely because they wanted to express what could not be expressed in conventional discursive form. Great works of visual art help us see for the first time what we have so often simply missed. They capture a slice of the world, stabilize it, and present it to us for our contemplation and reflection. Who has shown the visual world of light more vividly than the impressionists? Who has informed us about the character of religious belief more movingly than the great Italian painters of the 14th century? Who has helped us see the teeming character of the urban landscape more acutely than the likes of a John Sloan, a Paul Cadmus, and a Raphael Soyer? Who has penetrated the corruption of the German bourgeois more convincingly than George Grosz? These artists and these periods speak to us in a language that carries meaning that cannot be conveyed through words. Will our children be able to understand what they have to say? Even more, will they know their messages exist?

The presence of the arts in the curriculum not only fosters the ability to access them meaningfully, their presence also increases the educational equity of our schools. As already indicated, we all come into the world like all others, like some others, and like no other person. The inclusion of the arts in the school's curriculum provides opportunity not only for all students to learn to read the arts, but especially for those students whose aptitudes are in the arts. For them, it is a chance to find a place in the sun. Helping children discover their aptitudes and interests is no trivial educational aim. When the opportunity to develop large and important areas of human development and expression is absent from our schools, those whose aptitudes reside in the excluded areas have virtually no possibility to discover their full capabilities. It is hard to discover what one doesn't have an opportunity to practice. Educational equity is an empty ideal when a substantial portion of our children are excluded from the very areas in which their talents reside. It is through a balanced curriculum that all of our children are likely to have an opportunity to share.

Finally, there is the matter of cognitive development. The particular mental skills we possess are influenced by the skills we have had an opportunity to use. To be able to think visually, to tolerate ambiguity, to exercise our imagination, to notice nuance, to perceive relationships between part and whole, to experience the expressiveness of form are acquired mental skills. The eye is a part of the mind, and discipline-based art education curricula offer opportunities to practice the skills required to perform such mental operations. In short, in a word- and rule-saturated school environment, the neglect of such skills is common. The result is an entire realm of cognition that is only partially realized. Thus, the case for discipline-based art education is also a case for the development of mind. What our children become, how well they learn to think, and the variety of forms they know how to read are in large measure due to what we have given them an opportunity to learn. As the ad says, "A Mind Is a Terrible Thing to Waste."

What's in it for our children? Perhaps we can now provide some answers: the ability to see, to imagine, to share, and to understand. Not a bad agenda for education.

References

1. For a more detailed discussion on the role of the senses in concept formation, see Elliot W. Eisner, *Cognition and Curriculum: A Basis for Deciding What to Teach*, New York: Longman Publishing Co., 1982.

2. This process is referred to, particularly in the literature of Gestalt psychology, as "perceptual differentiation." For its application to art, see Rudolf Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception*, Berkeley: The University of California Press,1954.

3. The development of the child's ability to recognize and recall is discussed in *The Handbook of Child Psychology*, Fourth Edition, (Paul Mussen, ed.), 1983.

4. Rudolf Arnheim, "The Double-Edged Mind" in *Teaching and Learning the Ways of Knowing*, 84th Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, ed. Elliot W. Eisner, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985.

5. Eisner, op. cit.

6. The concept of "language" is used here metaphorically. The arts are not languages in the sense in which discursive propositions constitute a language, but they are articulated forms, intended to convey meaning, whose structure we learn to comprehend. See, for example, Nelson Goodman, *The Languages of Art*, Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1976.

7. Among the pioneers who have described the representational functions of non-discursive form is Susanne Langer. See her book, *Philosophy in New Key*, New York: New American Library, 1956, and her more recent work, *Mind: An Essay on Human Feeling*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1967.

8. In *Art as Experience*, John Dewey writes the following: "The poetic as distinct from the prosaic, aesthetic art as distinct from scientific, expression as distinct from statement, does something different from leading to an experience. It constitutes one. . . . The poem, or painting, does not operate in the dimension of correct descriptive statement but in that of experience itself. Poetry and prose, literal photograph and painting, operate in different media to distinct ends. Prose is set forth in propositions. The logic of poetry is super-propositional even when it uses what are, grammatically speaking, propositions. The latter have intent; art is an immediate realization of intent."

9. See Michael Cole, "Mind as Cultural Achievement: Implications for I.Q. Testing," in *Teaching and Learning the Ways of Knowing*, ed. Elliot W. Eisner, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1985.

10. Cole, ibid.

11. The classic statement on this matter is found in Plato's *Republic*, especially chapters 6 and 7. Plato, *The Republic*, B. Jowett (trans.), New York: The Modern Library, 1956.

12. Ibid.

13. Howard Gardner, *Frames of Mind*, New York: Basic Books, 1985.

14. Michael Cole and Sylvia Scribner, *The Psychology of Literacy*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981.

15. Gardner, op. cit.

16. Since 1982, approximately 20 states have created policies requiring a year of study in the fine arts as a condition for high school graduation. This is an increase of approximately 50 percent. In addition, the University of California and the California State University System now give academic credit to high school students who have enrolled in art courses that have features similar to those of discipline-based art education.

17. Art educators have had a long-standing interest in the cultivation of creativity. This interest was related to the educational views of the neoprogressives and was aimed at providing children with opportunities for self-expression that they believed to be limited in most school programs. In this orientation to the teaching of art, art was more an instrument than a subject matter to be learned. See, for example, Florence Cane, *The Artist in Each of Us*, London: Thames and Hudson, 1951.

18. This phrase is borrowed from Clyde Kluckhohn and Henry Murray's *Nature, Society, and Culture*, New York: Alfred Knopf, 1961.

19. The idea that children develop from the outside in as well as the inside out has been articulated most forcefully by Jerome Bruner in "The Course of Cognitive Growth," *American Psychologist*, Vol. 19, January 1964, pp. 1–15.

20. For a lucid and trenchant discussion on the effects of rewards on children, see Mark Lepper and David Green, *The Hidden Cost of Reward*, Hillsdale, NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates, 1978. In research conducted by the authors, they discovered that children who are given extrinsic rewards for tasks that would be otherwise intrinsically satisfying are less likely to engage in those tasks when the rewards are not provided.

21. Discipline-based art education is not solely concerned with enabling children to see what is referred to as "works of art," but the visual world generally. The skills needed to see the qualities of works of art are also applicable to seeing the qualities found in the environment in general. What is required, of course, is not only skills, but attitudes toward seeing. Discipline-based art education is interested both in skills and in attitude development.

22. Eisner, op. cit.

23. For a discussion on *decentration*, see Jean Piaget. Decentration is also similar to what Rudolf Arnheim calls "local solutions." See his book *Art and Visual Perception*, Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1954.

24. In *Art as Experience*, John Dewey distinguishes between seeing and recognizing as follows: "Bare recognition is satisfied when a proper tag or label is attached, 'proper' signifying one that serves a purpose outside the act of recognition—as a salesman identifies wares by a sample. It involves no stir of the organism, no inner commotion. But an act of perception proceeds by waves that extend serially throughout the entire organism. There is, therefore, no such thing in perception as seeing or hearing *plus* emotion. The perceived object or scene is emotionally pervaded throughout. When an aroused emotion does not permeate the material that is perceived or thought of, it is either preliminary or pathological."

25. For a critique of the use of objectives in the curriculum field, see Elliot W. Eisner, *The Educational Imagination: On the Design and Evaluation of School Programs*, Second Edition, New York: The Macmillan Co., 1985. Chapter 6.

26. In the literature of educational psychology, this is referred to as divergent, rather than convergent behavior.

27. Eisner, op. cit.

28. Basil Bernstein. "On the Classification and Framing of Educational Knowledge," in *Knowledge and Control*, ed. Michael Young, London: Colliers-Macmillan Publishers, 1971.

29. See the Plowden Report titled *Children and Their Primary Schools*, London: Central Advisory Council for Education (England), 1967. Also see Elliot W. Eisner, *English Primary Schools: Some Observations and Assessments*, a study supported by the Spencer Foundation, Stanford, 1972.

30. A concept of a teacher-proof curriculum was developed in the early 1970s as the result of a desire to bypass perceived teacher incompetency. Happily, few educators now entertain such a possibility. It has been widely realized that the teacher is and is likely to remain the critical element in effective learning.

31. John Dewey, *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry*, New York: H. Holt and Company, 1939.

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33. In much of the school-improvement literature, the principal has been identified as the single most important individual effecting school improvements.

34. Lee J. Cronbach, "Evaluation for Course Improvement," in *New Curricula*, ed. R. W. Heath, New York: Harper and Row, 1963.

35. Elliot W. Eisner, *The Educational Imagination: On the Design and Evaluation of School Programs*, Second Edition, New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1985. See especially chapters 9, 10, and 11.

36. *Nielson Report on Television*, A. C. Nielson Company, Nielson Plaza, Northbrook, Illinois, 1985. pp. 8–9.

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